

Message Text

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S/S: MR. GAMMON

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 203849

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, SA

SUBJECT: DOD SURVEY OF SAUDI ARMED FORCES

1. SURVEYS POUCHED 13 SEPT HAVE BEEN APPROVED BY STATE/DOD AND YOU ARE AUTHORIZED TO PRESENT THEM TO MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AND AVIATION (MODA). IN DOING SO, HOWEVER, YOU SHOULD MAKE THE FOLLOWING POINTS, MOST OF WHICH DERIVE FROM STATE/DOD CONCERN AT EFFECT MANPOWER SHORTAGES AND REQUIREMENTS FOR TRAINING ARE LIKELY TO HAVE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SURVEY RECOMMENDATIONS (RECOMMEND YOU ALSO PRESENT THESE POINTS IN WRITING IN AN APPROPRIATE FORM):

A. JOINT SURVEY REPORT ANALYZES CURRENT MODA ORGANIZATION AND RECOMMENDS CONVERTING THE EXISTING GENERAL STAFF

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(ESSENTIALLY AN ARMY STAFF) INTO A JOINT MILITARY STAFF

AND ESTABLISHING A SEPARATE SAUDI ARABIAN ARMY (SAA) HEADQUARTERS AND STAFF. IF MODA DESIRES TO EXERCISE MORE DIRECT CONTROL OVER THE SERVICES, AN ALTERNATE ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN IS INCLUDED FOR CONSIDERATION. IT IS RECOGNIZED THAT INITIALLY THE ROYAL SAUDI AIR FORCE (RSAF), AND PARTICULARLY THE ROYAL SAUDI NAVAL FORCE (RSNF), WILL NOT BE CAPABLE OF FILLING ALL AUTHORIZED MANPOWER SPACES IN THE PROPOSED JOINT ORGANIZATION WITHOUT SERIOUSLY DEGRADING INDIVIDUAL SERVICE EXPERIENCE LEVELS. THEREFORE, ALLOWANCES MUST BE MADE IN MANPOWER PROJECTIONS AND TRAINING PROGRAMS TO PERMIT GRADUAL INTEGRATION OF QUALIFIED

RSNF AND RSAF PERSONNEL, AS THEY BECOME AVAILABLE, INTO THE JOINT STAFF ORGANIZATION. IMPLEMENTATION OF A JOINT STAFF SHOULD BE BASED ON MAINTAINING OVERALL ARMED FORCES CAPABILITY TO DISCHARGE FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES EFFECTIVELY AND MAY REQUIRE SOME ADJUSTMENT IN TIME-PHASING. WE CONSIDER SAG TO BE BEST JUDGE OF HOW EFFECTIVELY IT CAN ACCOMMODATE THE PROPOSED TIMEPHASING FOR THE RECOMMENDED JOINT STAFF ORGANIZATION.

B. ANOTHER KEY POINT WHICH MUST BE STRESSED TO SAUDIS IS POTENTIAL INADEQUACY OF SAUDI ARABIAN TRAINABLE MANPOWER BASE TO SUPPORT THE REQUIRED SKILL LEVELS, MAJOR EQUIPMENT DELIVERIES, AND TIMEPHASING INHERENT IN THE RECOMMENDED FORCE STRUCTURE. THE REPORTS EMPHASIZE THAT THE MANPOWER BASE FOR THE TECHNICAL SKILLS (E.G., MACHINISTS, ELECTRONIC AND ADP TECHNICIANS, AND PILOTS) IS THE MOST RESTRICTIVE ELEMENT CURRENTLY PERCEIVED AND, FURTHER, THAT IT WILL BE NECESSARY FOR SAG TO ESTABLISH MANNING PRIORITIES FOR FUNCTIONS COMPETING FOR LIMITED MANPOWER RESOURCES. IN THIS REGARD AND IN LIGHT OF THE LIMITED SUPERVISORY MANPOWER BASE, THE DEVELOPMENT OF OPERATIONAL FORCES SHOULD TAKE MAXIMUM ADVANTAGE OF EXISTING ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES AND EXPERTISE. SLIPPAGE IN RECOMMENDED FORCE DEVELOPMENT SCHEDULES COULD OCCUR IF SUFFICIENT ACTIONS TO DEVELOP AN ADEQUATE MANPOWER BASE ARE NOT IMPLEMENTED IN THE NEAR TERM. IT IS CONSIDERED ESSENTIAL THAT THE SAUDIS PERIODICALLY REVIEW THE PROGRESS OF THE MANPOWER PROGRAM TO DETERMINE NECESSARY ADJUSTMENTS

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IN THE RECOMMENDED FORCE STRUCTURE.

C. IN ADDITION, WE RECOGNIZE THAT SCOPE OF MODERNIZATION AND EXPANSION PROPOSALS MAY BE OVERLY OPTIMISTIC RELATIVE TO MANPOWER BASE RESOURCES OVER THE 10-YEAR PERIOD. THEREFORE, WE RECOMMEND THAT SAG, IN IMPLEMENTING FORCE DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS, CAREFULLY CONSIDER THE LIMITATIONS OF TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES. THE RESULTING

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE SHOULD INSURE OPTIMAL FORCE MANAGEMENT AND MANPOWER UTILIZATION, ESPECIALLY IN THE AREAS OF HIGH TECHNOLOGICAL SOPHISTICATION.

D. FUTURE EQUIPMENT AVAILABILITIES WILL ALSO HAVE A MAJOR IMPACT ON DETERMINING THE IMPLEMENTING SCHEDULES SHOWN ON THE MILESTONE CHARTS. CONSEQUENTLY CHANGES IN THE SCHEDULES CURRENTLY SHOWN SHOULD BE ANTICIPATED. IN TURN, THESE CHANGES WILL MOST LIKELY HAVE AN EFFECT ON TRAINING SCHEDULES.

E. THE SAUDI NAVAL EXPANSION PROGRAM (SNEP), CURRENTLY IN THE IMPLEMENTATION PHASE, HAS NOT BEEN REVIEWED. SNEP WILL CONTINUE, BASED ON PLANS AND CRITERIA AS APPROVED AND FUNDED BY THE SAG IN MARCH 1974. INCLUDED IN THE SAUDI ARABIAN NAVY REPORT IS AN IDENTIFICATION OF THOSE AREAS THAT WILL REQUIRE INTERFACE WITH OTHER SAUDI ARABIAN ARMED FORCES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL.

F. DURING PRESENTATION OF THE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE RSAF SURVEY REPORT TO THE SAG, THE VICE MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND AVIATION EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE RECOMMENDED TIMING FOR PHASEOUT OF LIGHTNING FIGHTERS AND DELIVERY OF ADVANCED MULTIPURPOSE FIGHTERS. TO ADDRESS HIS CONCERN, YOU SHOULD HIGHLIGHT THE RATIONALE FOR THE RECOMMENDATION CONTAINED IN THE FULL RSAF SURVEY REPORT, NAMELY, CONVERSION OF THE ROLE OF THE LIGHTNINGS TO AIR DEFENSE, TOGETHER WITH REDUCTION OF THE LIGHTNING FORCE BY ONE HALF; THIS WILL PROLONG THE OPERATIONAL LIFE OF THE REMAINING LIGHTNINGS UNTIL 1980 WHEN DELIVERY OF THE FOLLOW-ON ADVANCED FIGHTER IS ANTICIPATED.

G. THE RELEASE OF THESE REPORTS TO SAG DOES NOT, OF
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ITSELF, CONSTITUTE US GOVERNMENT ENDORSEMENT OF A POSSIBLE COMMITMENT TO SUPPLY SPECIFIC MILITARY SYSTEMS, EQUIPMENT, OR PERSONNEL TO THE SAUDI ARABIAN ARMED FORCES.

2. ALTHOUGH WE HAVE NOT HAD TIME TO ASSESS THE CUMULATIVE IMPACT OF THE TOTAL PROGRAM AND ITS TIME PHASING AS OUTLINED IN THE MILESTONE CHARTS, STATE/DOD BELIEVE THAT SOME OF THE IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS INDICATED ON THE CHARTS MAY BE TOO ACCELERATED AND AMBITIOUS. MAJOR FACTORS DETERMINING A SCHEDULE WOULD BE MANPOWER AVAILABILITY, TRAINING, AND, AS NOTED IN PARA 1.D., ABOVE, AVAILABILITY OF EQUIPMENT. WE ANTICIPATE THAT TIME PHASING WILL BE A SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION AT THE US-SAUDI SECURITY MEETINGS IN NOVEMBER.

3. WE RECOGNIZE THAT IT MAY BE DIFFICULT TO GET MODA
TO FOCUS ON THE SURVEYS DURING RAMADAN. HOWEVER, WE
WOULD HOPE, IN VIEW OF THE UPCOMING SECURITY MEETING, THAT
IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR YOU TO OBTAIN AT LEAST PRE-
LIMINARY MODA COMMENTS ON THE SURVEYS FOR TRANSMITTAL
TO WASHINGTON BY 20 OCTOBER. KISSINGER

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